

**Overview of Coordinated Transportation and Regional  
Transportation Coordination Groups  
Contact Information**

# Overview of Coordinated Transportation

In Mississippi some degree of public or specialized transportation services is available in a number of areas. Since few local communities can afford to support a variety of parallel transportation services, it just makes for sound public policy to build upon the existing resources. Even though there is some degree of transportation available in many areas of the state, unmet transportation needs remain in many communities. Repeatedly the lack of adequate transportation continues to be cited as some of the main obstacles to employment and full participation in community life for older adults, persons with disabilities, low income individuals and others. Coordination of transportation services and resources is the best way to stretch scarce transportation resources and improve mobility for everyone.

Coordination of transportation services is an integral part of the state's policies and goals for administering public transportation programs such as 5311, 5316, 5310, 5317, and 5307. Coordinated transportation is a "process" through which stakeholders from different agencies, organizations, and client groups, work together to achieve one or all of the following goals:

1. More efficient service delivery.
2. More cost effective service delivery.
3. Increased capacity.
4. Easier access.
5. A better quality of life.

The overall goal of coordinated transportation is: to improve the availability and accessibility of public and specialized transportation resources for rural and small urban areas through a collaborative planning process and increased investments; improve and increase the level of coordination of transportation resources that are available through State Agencies, other public bodies and private sector.

Local coordinated planning is spearheaded via six regional groups. Each of the local groups has developed regional coordinated human service-public transportation plans. These plans have been developed in accordance with FTA guidance through a process that includes representatives of the public, private, and non-profit transportation as well as and human service providers and participation by members of the public (The plan must be developed Participation in the coordinated planning process is a prerequisite to receiving funding through the formula grant programs). The purpose of the Regional Coordination Group is to:

- a) Assess regional transportation needs.
- b) Identify transportation gaps.
- c) Develop alternatives and recommendations to address unmet needs and gaps.

Over the past several years, in communities throughout the state, groups of dedicated stakeholders have been working to develop solutions to the mobility issues faced by local citizens. Through a truly collaborative planning process, Regional coordination has become the keystone concept for

developing innovative arrangements to meet transportation needs of local communities. The impact of a coordinated network multiplies the service provided by individual providers and broadens the support base.

## **Regional Coordination Transportation Planning Groups**

### **Delta Rides:**



Delta Rides is a network of non-profit organizations that provide transportation services within the Mississippi Delta region. While many of these organizations provide special services for seniors, persons with disabilities or Medicaid clients, they also provide general public transit services that are available to anyone.

The Delta Rides Regional Group was developed in an effort to respond to the federal regulations of SAFETEA-LU. Since February 2006, transportation stakeholders have endeavored to develop and adopt a plan for the seventeen counties that make the Mississippi Delta – Washington, Desoto, Humphreys, Carroll, Issaquena, Panola, Quitman, Bolivar, Coahoma, Leflore, Sunflower, Sharkey, Tunica, Tallahatchie, Holmes, Yazoo, and Warren Counties. The development of the regional plan began in 2006 and included transportation providers, state agencies, transportation consumers, non-profit agencies and for-profit organizations as well as faith-based organizations. The overarching goal of this planning effort is to provide an opportunity for a diverse range of stakeholders with a common interest in human service transportation to convene and collaborate on how best to provide transportation service for targeted populations.

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### **Participating Organizations:**

Aaron Henry Community Health Center  
Bolivar County Council on Aging  
Delta Bus Lines  
Delta Community Mental Health  
Hollandale H.E.G.A Holmes  
Holmes Transportation  
Netterville Transit Co. (NTC)  
Mallory Community Health Center  
Mid-Delta Development League  
City of Belzoni  
City of Tchula  
City of Itta Bena  
City of Leland  
Delta Foundation, Inc.

Coleman Transportation Services  
Veteran Affairs Office-Greenville, MS  
Veteran Affairs Office- Cleveland, MS  
MS Christian Family Services  
MS Valley State University  
North Central Planning and Development  
North Delta Planning and Development District  
Region One Mental Health Center  
Sharkey County Board of Supervisors  
J&M Transportation Services  
The Community Student Learning Center of  
Lexington, MS  
Warren- Washington- Issaquena- Sharkey-  
Community Action Agency (WWISCA)

## **Ride The Smile:**



Ride the Smile Regional Coordination Group primarily acts as a coordinated general public transportation system that meets the community's needs through providing an integrated community-wide transportation system involving key players such as local decision-makers and leaders, agencies which either have a need for increased transportation services or currently provide services, local residents, local school representatives, and other agencies/organizations such as MDOT.

Stakeholder participation in the coordinated transportation planning helped the Northeast Regional group identify regional gaps in coordinated transportation. The Northeast Regional Planning Group is actively working to overcome the needs and gaps identified in the plan through broad-based collaboration throughout the region.

The Northeast Mississippi: Ride the Smile coordinated to meet the public transportation needs of local residents within a 14-county area: Alcorn, Benton, Calhoun, Chickasaw, Itawamba, Lafayette, Lee, Marshall, Monroe, Pontotoc, Prentiss, Tippah, Tishomingo and Union Counties. Transit services are limited in Northeast Mississippi with the discontinuation of Lift, Inc. in Tupelo in March 2007; thus the challenge to meet transit needs has become greater. Therefore, Northeast Mississippi: Ride the Smile has worked to develop a service in the Northeast region that would be a success through coordinating a network of inclusive, seamless, coordinated transportation systems that are accessible, reliable and promote independence.

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## **Participating Organizations:**

Alcorn County Human Resource Agency  
City of Oxford  
Climb-Up Inc.  
Lowndes County Dial-A-Bus  
Northeast MS Community Services  
Retired Senior Citizen Program RSVP  
Three Rivers Planning and Development District  
Timber Hills Mental Health Services  
United Community Action Committee  
Oxford University Transit  
Lee County Multi-Purpose Center  
Northeast Planning and Development District  
United Community Action Committee

## TRANS-CON



The transportation stakeholders of the Central Region of the State of Mississippi have endeavored since February 2006 to develop and adopt a plan for the seven counties that make the Central Mississippi Planning and Development District – Copiah, Hinds, Madison, Rankin, Simpson, Warren, and Yazoo Counties.

The plan addresses all forms of transportation services regardless of funding categories. It is the mission of TRANS-CON to provide safe, reliable, available, affordable, and accessible transportation services to Central Mississippi through the

development and implementation of regional and statewide transportation service coordination. To assist in the identification of the regional gaps to coordinate transportation services, the planning group enlisted the services of a consultant to facilitate the data collection and analysis necessary for the development of the regional plan.

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### Participating Organizations:

Bolivar County Council on Aging, Inc.  
Cannon Transportation  
City of Jackson Human and Cultural Services  
Copiah County Human Resource Agency  
Emmanuel Ridge Community Services  
Grapevine Transportation  
Hinds County Human Resource Agency  
Jackson Medical Mall  
JATRAN  
Liberty Connection

Madison County Citizen Service Agency  
Mid-West Industries  
Miles Corporation  
NRoute Transit Commission  
Rankin County Human Resource Agency  
South Central Community Action Agency  
Warren-Yazoo Mental Health Services  
Willowood Development Center  
Yazoo County Human Resource Agency

## **EZTAG**



It is the mission of EZTAG to enhance and improve the quality of life to East Central Mississippi by providing mobility through coordinated safe, affordable, and accessible transportation. The purpose of the EZTAG Regional Coordinated Group is to provide an assessment of the regional transportation needs, identify transportation gaps, and develop transportation alternatives and

recommendations to address identified unmet transportation needs and gaps in the East Central region of the state. The EZTAG Coordinated Regional Planning Group is actively working to overcome the needs and gaps identified in the plan through broad-based collaboration throughout the region.

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**Mobility Manager: Jeremy Bell**

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### **Participating Organizations:**

East Central Planning and Development District  
Golden Triangle Planning and Development District  
Central Mississippi Residential Center  
MS Band of Choctaw Indians- Choctaw Transit  
Starkville Mississippi State Area Rapid Transit (SMART)  
Noxubee County Human Resource Agency  
Weems Community Mental Health  
Lowndes County Dial-A-Bus  
Mississippi Rehabilitation Services- Ability Works

## **S.M.A.R.T - Southwest MS Assessable Regional Transportation**



The mission of the Southwest Mississippi Accessible Regional Transportation is to enhance transportation access to transit services, minimize duplication of transit services, and develop the most cost-efficient transit system possible in Southwest Mississippi through the coordination of existing and future services.

Stakeholders in Southwest Mississippi realized the need to coordinate services to improve efficiency and maximize transportation options for all persons. Local elected officials, human service providers, faith-based organizations, public and private transportation providers, and others were invited to explore the options for the region. Through these meetings *S.M.A.R.T* has devised a list of gaps and needs that they are actively working to overcome.

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### **Participating Organizations:**

Claiborne County Human Resource Agency

Copiah County Human Resource Agency

DJ Transit / DJ Shuttle

Five County Child Development Center

Mount Zion Economic Community Center

Natchez Transit System

Natchez Senior Citizens Center

Pine Belt Mental Healthcare Resources

Southwest MS Mental Health Complex

South West MS Planning and Development District

## **SMT - Southern MS Transit**



The mission of Southern Mississippi Transit is to deliver safe affordable and reliable transportation to culturally diverse communities with varying transportation needs. The coalition of Southern Mississippi transportation service providers formed "Southern Mississippi Transit" to address the federal regulation for the development of a statewide plan for coordinated transportation. The founding members of the organization sought to identify and include all of the region's transportation stakeholders for participation in a regional effort to assist in the formulation and implementation of a

plan to coordinate transportation services. The stakeholders identified were mayors, city planners, Area Agencies on Aging, assisted living communities, City Council, community action programs, schools, community colleges, hospitals, County Boards of Supervisors, state agencies, private sector businesses, and churches.

The regional planning group has held monthly meetings to follow the progress of the local stakeholder meetings. Through these meetings *SMT* has devised a list of strategic priorities to carry out their goals and objectives.

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### **Participating Organizations:**

Community Development Inc.

Coast Transit Authority

Five County Child Development Center

Jackson County Civic Action Committee

Pearl River Valley Opportunity

Pine Belt Mental Healthcare Resources

Southern MS Planning and Development District